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September 13, 2017

Mr. John Kuhn
National Director, Supportive Services for Veteran Families
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20420

RE: Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program (SSVF) Application (13-NY-122)

Dear Mr. Kuhn;

I am writing to express several concerns regarding the implementation of fiscal year 2018 grant allocations for the Support Services for Veteran Families Program (SSVF), specifically the impact that changes in funding will have on Hudson River Housing, Inc. (HRH) and the veteran population within Dutchess County, NY.

It is my understanding that HRH received a communication from your office dated September 7, 2017, which informed the organization it would no longer be receiving a renewal in funding for the FY 2018 grant cycle. Veterans and related stakeholders within Dutchess County have informed me that this determination by the Department of Veterans Affairs will cause severe problems for their at-risk veteran population, threatening the progress that HRH has made toward reducing the effective rate of veteran homelessness over the last several years.

As I am sure you are aware, the SSVF program has provided critical funding to address veteran homelessness within the county, and as such any substantial change in this funding structure will only place veterans at greater risk. Dutchess County simply does not have the capacity to deal with this issue without an adequate funding stream because HRH is the only program providing direct housing and support services to local veterans and their families. Veterans cannot rely solely on the VA because the closest facilities in Castle Point and Montrose lack the ability to house these at-risk individuals.

Of additional concern, Dutchess County, like much of the rest of the country, faces an opioid epidemic. This crisis impacts all segments of the population, including our veteran community. Ending SSVF funding to the county removes a critical safety net that our veterans rely on for a host of support services, placing them at greater risk of opioid abuse.

Finally, it is incredibly concerning that HRH only received conditional notification of a denial of funding on September 7, 2017, with the expectation that it would need to end these vital services

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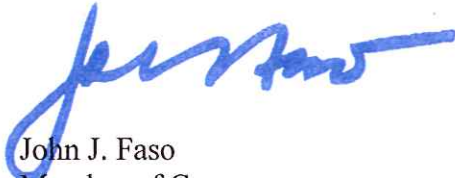
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by September 29, 2017. The late issuance of this denial notice has left HRH only 16 business days to transition veterans and staff, leaving them with virtually no other local support options.

I implore you to use the full resources at your disposal to support HRH, and more importantly the veterans who are now at risk of homelessness, in order to deliver the services they require.

I look forward to hearing from you on this timely matter.

Sincerely,



John J. Faso
Member of Congress

cc Dr. Joan E. McInerney, Network Director, New York/New Jersey VA Health Care Network